

THE
Religious Monitor, or Theological Scales.

Great is the TRUTH, and stronger than all things. ESD.

For the Religious Monitor, &c.

THE REFORMER, No. III.

MAN is a rational yet an inconsistent being, tho well acquainted with the blessings which flow from a virtuous conduct, and a well regulated life, he frequently neglects the one, and renounces the other. The impulse of the moment, or the contemplation of some trifling enjoyment, many times prompts him to sacrifice the duty which he owes to his maker, and that common benevolence, which every person has a right to require at his hand.

The ways in which the Deity is offended, and in which the welfare of many are destroyed, are various. In the present paper I shall notice but one, and which of all others is the most base, and deadly. The tongue is a little member, yet the agent of much mischief; it was given to man by his creator for the most valuable of purposes, but is made the instrument of falsehood, of treachery, of profaneness, and of blasphemy: thus are the most useful things frequently perverted.

It is truly astonishing to listen to the language, which generally prevails at the present day,—that being who ought to be thought of but with respect, or spoken of but with awe, and with reverence, is openly insult-

ed, his laws and institutions are cursed, and (if I may use the expression) his ears stunned with the most opprobrious epithets. Would those who are habituated to the using of foul language, consider but for a moment, the character of that being who has said thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain, I am persuaded that they would put more restraint upon the tongue.

There are many who are but novices in the business of swearing, and who do not come forth with that boldness with which those do, who are more hardened in iniquity. This class of swearers frequently palliate their conduct by saying, "surely there can be no harm in the words I use." To these I would observe, that the greatest blasphemers that ever existed could once say the same. Men do not grow wicked instantaneously, but by degrees; a small vice imperceptibly crept into the mind, and by long continuance is no longer esteemed vicious, the barrier of virtue being broken down by a light temptation, leaves room for the entrance of many and great ones.

The scriptures in a peremptory manner prohibit vain talking of every description, and re-

H

present

present it as debasive to the human character, and as in the highest degree offensive to the Deity. To swear is to sin without any temptation, and is therefore a vice which cannot be justified upon any principle whatever: could but one advantage be pointed out that is caused by using profane language, I would retract all that I have said upon the subject; but it cannot be done, I challenge any men to point out one benefit that results from the practice.

The disadvantages flowing from swearing are many and great. By it the temporal and eternal happiness of men are

frequently ruined, and are always endangered. It is a dreadful thing to rush into the presence of the Almighty with that inconsiderateness which is the case with many, and to call his vengeance upon the soul of a fellow being. The habit is a dreadful one, and ought to be avoided more than death itself, for it frequently leads to infamy, destruction, and misery.—The Reformer is convinced that if swearing was driven from the world, that the great body of other vices would follow, that virtue would take the rule, and reign triumphant.

For the Religious Monitor, &c.

ON SLANDER.

"No slanders dwell upon his tongue,

"He hates to do his neighbour wrong."

ANY one who does not bridle his tongue, we cannot think is possessor of true religion, for two reasons. *First*: he breaks an express command, with which it is supposed he is acquainted, *Thou shalt not go up and down as a tale-bearer among thy people.* *Secondly*: he breaks the law of benevolence, which requires him to *love his neighbor as himself.* Will he spread an evil report concerning himself? It is the dictate of religion that he ought not to do it concerning his neighbor; and its tendency is to restrain him in one case as much as self love does in the other. *For as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.*

People of unbridled tongues, appear to be conscious that in

tale-bearing they do wrong, by enjoining secrecy upon those to whom they retail slander. Thus an evil report goes round, from person to person, and circle to circle, each one who has a hand in it, extorting the promise of secrecy; in order to atone for the sin of tale-bearing. This has the principal ingredients of evil-speaking. Injoining secrecy will make men the more suspected that they only *seem* to be religious. If any thing concerning our neighbor be a secret, you cannot reveal it to me, to his disadvantage, without adding a breach of trust, to the crime of calumny. A person of true honor will not be guilty of this, because he scorns a mean thing. A person of true religion will not, because he fears that God

who has forbidden it. A good member of civil society will not, because injurious to the peace and welfare of the community. It is exceedingly prejudicial to the cause of government and morals, to have all the dirty, infamous, ungrateful, wicked things, made public, which are done by individuals, provided, such works of darkness can be buried in silence and forgotten, with justice to particular persons and without injury to the interests of the community. It is for the peace of neighborhoods and families, and for the safety of individuals not to have a tale-bearer among the people. Such an one does not bridle his tongue, and if he pretend to be religious, that man's religion is vain. He ought to be proscribed, dreaded, and avoided as an enemy to virtue and the friend of mischief.

Again.—But, if it should be said, that many honest and well meaning people are only the reporters of some evil things which they have heard, without the intention of injuring any one, let us look at those who either originate or spread a report already made, with a design to destroy the good name of some particular person. Can it be thought that the principles of justice, truth, and benevolence have gained any residence in *such* a mind: If a man will intentionally deprive you of a good name, what reason is there to think he would not rob you of your property, and even take your life, unless restrained by the fear of punishment? If such an one make pretensions to the reputa-

tion of an honest, virtuous man, every good judge will be of opinion, that he adds to the character of a knave, and a rascal, that of a hypocrite. Be not deceived by such mens seeming to be religious: The garb which they have put on to hide their wicked intentions, is too thin, or too short to conceal the cloven foot. Avoid him as an impostor; for while he relates to you, how much influence the power of godliness has upon his heart, you see it has none upon his tongue. Tho he may give you the token of brotherly love with one hand, yet perhaps in the other he grasps a dagger to thrust into your bosom when opportunity shall present. His pretensions to honesty, love and candor are made only that he may ruin your good name, without injuring himself by such a crime. That tongue which the God of nature gave him for noble purposes—those lips which he ought to open for the advantage of his fellow-men, become the organs of deceit, falsehood, and defamation. It would be a blessing to the world to have such a tongue paralysed, and such lips closed in everlasting silence. He who carries such a tongue in his head, carries the heart of a Judas in his bosom. In fine: If examination was made, it is probable that those people would appear to have the most faults, who find the most fault with others, and remark upon their foibles with unforgiving severity. If a man let his tongue loose upon all his neighbors, it is a good evidence that

that he does not bridle it. If any one is censorious and disposed to aggravate the faults of others when speaking upon them, it is more than probable that by this he intends to lessen the appearance of his own. *Judge not that ye be not judged; but indulge the pleasing exercise of charity, which thinketh no evil, and will hide a multitude of sins.* The apostolic exhortation is to *speakevil of no man*. In how many ways, is the benevolent end of this apostolic counsel, opposed, and defeated: not only in speaking against individuals, but bodies and societies of men. That freedom and censure with which different denominations of christians speak against each other is often *evil speaking*. It is perfectly absurd for any one denomination to think that all wisdom, truth, and goodness are exclusively with them. This is the temper of the Pharisee, so

often condemned by our Savior. It is the old leaven of hypocrisy which *may* leaven the whole lump. Look at home, ye various denominations of christians, and you will see so much imperfection among yourselves, as to prevent the but too common practice of anathematizing each other. If people have no charity but for themselves, it is pretty certain they have more for themselves than they ought to have. Wherever such evil-speaking, self-conceit, and uncharitableness abound, it is more than probable that in some instances men strain at a gnat and swallow a camel; and in other instances attempt to pull the mote out of other people's eyes, when a beam is in their own. "If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridled not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain." AMICUS.

From the Rev. Dr. Wm. Smith's Discourse on the Consecration of the right rev. ABRAHAM JARVIS, D.D. to the Episcopal Chair.

He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Eph. iv. 11 & 12.

JESUS said to the immediate servants of his household, before his ascension, "Behold I send the promise of my father upon you; but tarry ye in Jerusalem until ye be endued with power from on high." This power was to be universal in its extent, and perpetual in its duration; and that it might not be at the option of every one who chose to assume it, was fenced

from invasion by being committed unto them as a sacred deposit. For thus runs the Commission our Lord gave to them, & to them only. "As my Father hath sent me even so send I you. Go into all the world & preach the gospel to every Creature; he who believeth and is baptized shall be saved; [put into a state of salvation] and he who believeth not shall be damned, [remain in a state of condemnation.] And he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted, and whose soever sins ye retain, they

they are retained. Disciple all Nations, by baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you. And lo! † I AM with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

Knowing well the nature and extent of their apostleship;—strong in the power of Jehovah; rejoicing to do the will of him that sent them, and zealous to finish his work:—these "Servants of the most high God" went out into all lands, and sent their words into the world's end, "to shew unto men the way of salvation." No wisdom could withstand the words which they spake; the heart of pride fainted, and the arm of human philosophy withered at the reasoning of a Paul on "righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come; and at the preaching of a Peter on the necessity of Christ's "dying to save sinners." God had given them "a mouth, and wisdom which all their adversaries were not able to gainsay nor resist." The words which they spake, and the miracles which they wrought confounded infidelity, bade defiance to the powers of darkness, and quickly converted innumerable sinners

into saints, innumerable idolaters into true worshipers of the true God. "The power of the Highest having overshadowed them," they became exceeding fruitful in begetting many sons "and daughters unto eternal glory." But the promise of Jesus "lo! I am with you always even unto the end of the world," could not belong to them exclusively, nor be understood in any other sense, than implying a regular and uninterrupted succession; together with a divine power and efficacy to accompany the "same, always even unto the end of the world."

The form by which the apostles ordained others, was that by which Jesus had ordained them. After having imparted to them his holy spirit, "he lifted up his hands and blessed them," so in like manner, the apostles and their successors always have done, do at this day, and will do to the end of the world, saying at the instant of their "laying on of hands"—after the example and by the authority of Jesus their Lord—"Receive thou the Holy Ghost. Whosoever sins thou dost remit, they are remitted, & whosoever sins thou dost retain, they are retained." (*To be continued.*)

† I AM—The name by which Christ "in the form of God" made himself known to Moses, Exodus, ch. 3, v. 14. "I AM that I AM," &c.

The name, by which, "in the form of man" he confessed himself to the soldiers sent to seize him, and who, at hearing it pronounced by his lips, "went backward and fell to the ground." St. John, ch. 18, v. 6.

The name, by which he promises to be with his Church to the end of the world.

This name is the English of the Hebrew word, JEHOVAH, and denotes self-existence—The translation might be, "The I AM hath sent you, &c." The I AM shall "be with you to the end of the world."

THE DEATHS OF THE APOSTLES. (*from page 53.*)

St. PHILIP, the apostle, after he had converted almost all Scythia to the faith of Christ, being fastened to a pillar by the neck, was stoned to death, making a glorious end at Hierapolis, a city of Asia, in the year 54.

JACOB, or JAMES the less, or the just, the apostle, called also our Lord's brother, was the first bishop of Hierusalem, where being thrown down from a pinnacle of the temple, and his thighs broken, as also wounded in the head with a dyer's club, he gave up the ghost, and was buried near the temple, in the year 63; he was called the less, from the stature of his body, to distinguish him from the other St. James, who was greater, or more bulky.

St. BARNABAS, whose proper name was Joses, or Joseph in Greek, was born of rich Jewish parents, of the tribe of Levi, at Cyprus, and educated in the knowledge of the law by the great Doctor Gamaliel. It is not certain when he was converted to christianity; but it is commonly supposed, that he was one of our Savior's seventy dis-

ciples. After Christ's ascension, we find him introducing Saint Paul to the apostles; sent to settle the new converts at Antioch, where he and Paul added many to the church: and they both, by the particular designation of the Holy Ghost, were set apart and sent to preach the gospel in his native country, Cyprus, Perga, Pamphylia, and throughout the lesser Asia. He was so grave and comely in his person, that, at Lystra, Barnabas was taken to be Mercury by the heathens. He at first opposed the Judaizing christians; but being afterwards drawn aside by the conduct of Peter, to dissemble his christian liberty to please the Jewish converts, St. Paul reprov'd him; and soon after, upon a dispute about Mark, these fellow laborers in the gospel parted; Saint Paul with Silas going to the churches of Syria and Cilicia, and Barnabas with Mark to his own country; where he, disputing in a synagogue at Salamis, was seized by the Jews, who, after exquisite tortures, stoned him to death.

(*To be continued.*)

RELIGIOUS SECTS.—*Continued from page 56.*

SANDEMANIANS, So called from Mr. Robert Sandeman, who published his sentiments in the year 1757. He was first a congregational preacher at Edinburgh, and afterwards came to New-England, and settled a society at Boston, Danbury, and other places. He was a disciple of Mr. John Glas, from whence this denomination are

called *Glasites* in Scotland. His leading sentiments appeared to be as follow:

I. That justifying *faith* is no more than a simple belief of the *truth*, or the divine testimony passively received.

II. That this divine testimony carries in itself sufficient ground of hope, and occasion of joy to every one who believes it,

it, without any thing wrought in us, or done by us, to give it a particular direction to ourselves.

To support this system the Sandemanians alledge, *that faith is called receiving the love of the truth*, and the apostle often speaks of *faith and truth* to the same purpose, as in John xvi. 13, *the spirit of truth*. 2 Cor. iv. 13, *the spirit of faith*. Acts vi. 7, *Obedient to the faith*. 1 Pet. i. 22, *In obeying the truth*. And divers other passages. The scriptures consider *faith* not as a work of ours, nor as any action exerted by the *human mind*; but set it in direct opposition to every work, whether of *body* or *mind*. See Rom. iv. 4, 5. This contrast excludes every idea of activity in the *mind*, from the matter of *justification*; so that we cannot speak of preparatory works of

any sort, without making the *gospel* a law of works. Rom. iii. 27, *Where is boasting then? It is excluded, &c.* Now boasting cannot be excluded, if any thing done by us sets us in a more probable way of obtaining the *salvation* which is of *grace*, whether it be called by the names of a *law work*, *serious exercise of seeking souls*, or laboring to obtain an interest in *Christ*, &c.

Every doctrine then which teaches us to do, or endeavor any thing towards our acceptance with GOD, stands opposed to the doctrines of the apostles, which, instead of directing us what to do, sets before us all that the most disquieted conscience can require, in order to acceptance with GOD, as already done and finished by JESUS CHRIST. (*To be continued.*)

Praise of Marriage, and the conduct of some Husbands censured.

AS man is a sociable creature not made for solitude but conversation, *marriage* is a noble institution, and a little useful society, from whence many advantages arise. The sorrows of life are lessened by this division, and the comforts of it increased by communication.—*Marriage* is, or should be, the most perfect state of *friendship*. Mutual interest produces mutual assistance. It is to this institution, that families have been raised and formed. All parentage and proximity proceed from hence; and in a happy marriage where both parties behave well in their respective stations, the *honey-moon* increases to years of bliss. Long possession rivets the

affection; and nothing, but parting, can be a material affliction. No age nor infirmity can unhinge a matrimonial esteem.—The many good qualities, services and obliging usage of each other, are so lodged in the memory, as to make life a continual scene of courtship, and the husband to carry always the lover about him.

On the contrary, when I see quarrels and disagreements in this state, I am concerned for the desolation which the divided house will certainly come into. How moving is the sight of an innocent offspring in such a family of discord, with a tenderness of nature pleading for both, not knowing which side to take
and

and tied up by duty and filial affection from acting against either! What instruction can children receive in such confusion? And how pernicious to posterity such evil example? It is matter of the greatest surprize, that a man who aims at character and reputation, that in the affairs of life will keep his word to preserve his credit, should forfeit all honor and integrity at home, and have no regard to the solemn engagements made to a wife.

It was a well judged action of a prince I have read of, who took an officer's commission from him, questioning his courage, upon an information that he beat

his wife. The paw of the lion or bear, which deals slaughter to every one else, is a nursing arm to the female. But such rough discipline is chiefly confined to the vulgar and underbred part of mankind. Porters and carmen are chiefly distinguished for such domestic heroism. The beau monde content themselves with silent hatred and indifference. Strangeness and ceremony, separate beds and apartments, kept mistresses, &c. are the genteel exercises of their aversion. In short, no man can be a fine gentleman, who is not a man of honor; and no man can be a man of honor, that makes a bad husband.

A SONG: *To the tune of Bunker-Hill.*

HARK whence that sound! Hark! hark the joyful shouting!
See! see what splendor spreads its beams around us—
Turning dark midnight into noon tide glory,
As it approaches.

With pomp majestic see the heavenly vision
Slowly descending, whilst attending angels
Pour acclamations, and celestial chantings,

Wake our attention.

Fear not ye shepherds 'tis the Prince of Peace comes
Full of compassion, full of love and pity;
Bringing Salvation for all sorts of mankind,

For all his people.

Go pay your homage to your infant Saviour,
Laid in a manger; view the Lord of Glory,
Meanly attended, yet the great Redeemer,

Yon star shall guide you.

Give God the glory; join the Host celestial;
Peace upon earth now, and good will towards men.
Raised from just terror to hope of life eternal,

Thro' a Mediator.

O may impressions of his boundless mercy
Ever remind me of my grateful duty.
Sweet the employment to proclaim his goodness,
And sing his praises.

Writers are requested to prefix titles to their productions.